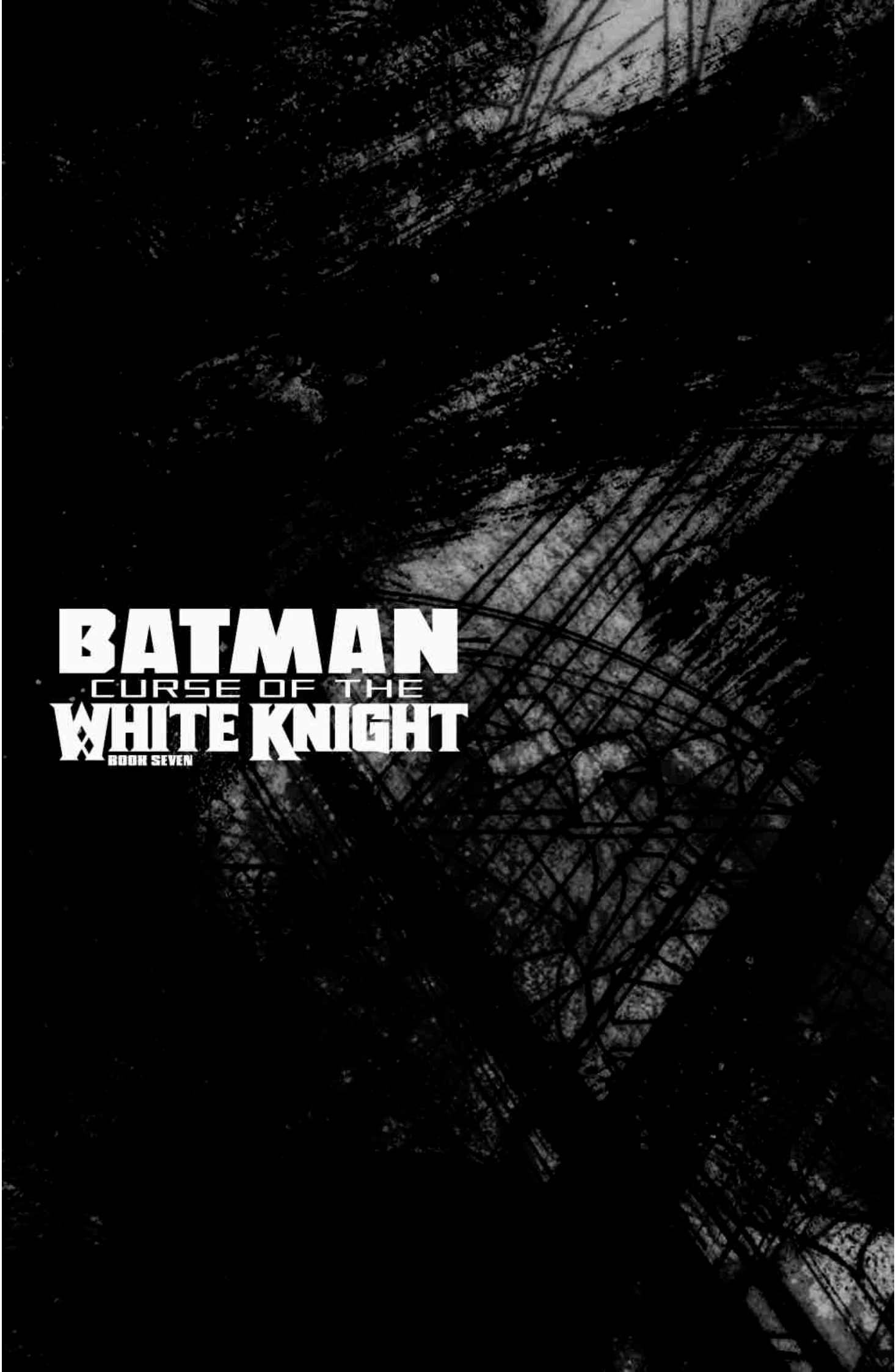
SEAN MURPHY WITH MATT HOLLINGSWORTH

BATMAN
CURSE OF THE WHITE KNIGHT

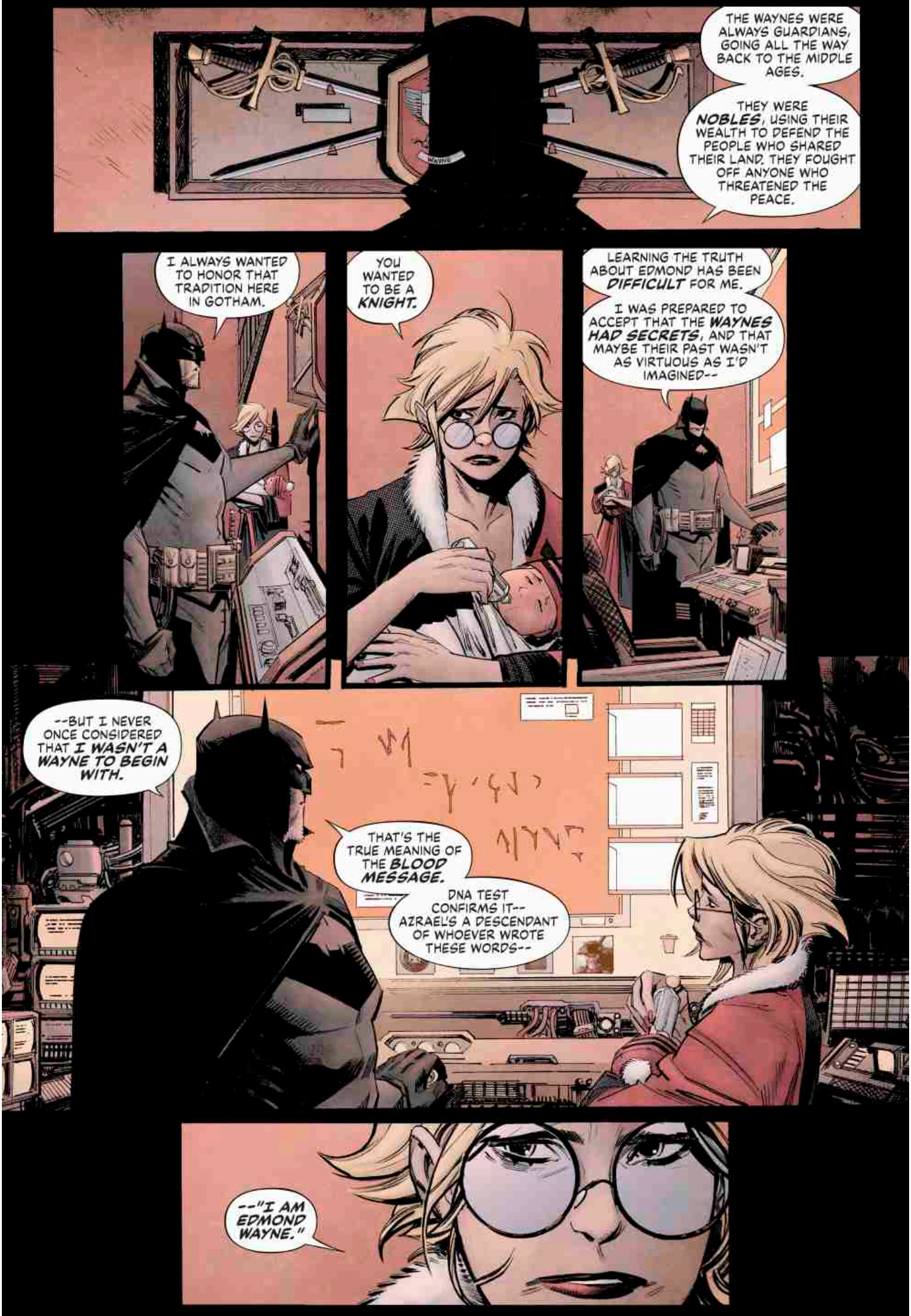
BOOK SEVEN

DC BLACK LABEL


BATMAN
CURSE OF THE
WHITE KNIGHT
BOOK SEVEN

MASTER BRUCE, WE'RE RUNNING LATE.
WHY AREN'T YOU DRESSED?
NO.
IT'S MY FAULT BECAUSE...
:SNIFF:
...I WAS THE ONE WHO WANTED TO GO TO THE MOVIE.
WHAT?
:SNIFF:
...
YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO--I THINK THEY WOULD BOTH UNDERSTAND.
IT'S MY FAULT IT HAPPENED.
NONSENSE...
...YOU COULDN'T HAVE SAVED THEM.
MY FATHER SAID I WASN'T ALLOWED TO TOUCH HIS SWORDS--BECAUSE I'D GET HURT.
THAT'S WHY I WANTED TO SEE THE MASK OF ZORRO.
SO I COULD LEARN HOW TO USE THEM.

I SEE.
WELL, HOW ABOUT WE MAKE A DEAL THEN?
IF YOU'RE READY TO ATTEND THE FUNERAL, THEN I THINK YOU'RE READY TO HOLD HIS RAPIER.
REALLY?
AND WHEN WE GET BACK, I'LL TEACH YOU HOW TO USE IT. I'LL TEACH YOU HOW TO FIGHT.
SO THE NEXT TIME YOU'RE IN DANGER, YOU'LL KNOW WHAT TO DO.
:SNIFF:
LIKE ZORRO?
LIKE ZORRO.


THE WAYNES WERE ALWAYS GUARDIANS, GOING ALL THE WAY BACK TO THE MIDDLE AGES.
THEY WERE NOBLES, USING THEIR WEALTH TO DEFEND THE PEOPLE WHO SHARED THEIR LAND. THEY FOUGHT OFF ANYONE WHO THREATENED THE PEACE.
I ALWAYS WANTED TO HONOR THAT TRADITION HERE IN GOTHAM.
YOU WANTED TO BE A KNIGHT.
LEARNING THE TRUTH ABOUT EDMOND HAS BEEN DIFFICULT FOR ME.
I WAS PREPARED TO ACCEPT THAT THE WAYNES HAD SECRETS, AND THAT MAYBE THEIR PAST WASN'T AS VIRTUOUS AS I'D IMAGINED--
--BUT I NEVER ONCE CONSIDERED THAT I WASN'T A WAYNE TO BEGIN WITH.
THAT'S THE TRUE MEANING OF THE BLOOD MESSAGE.
DNA TEST CONFIRMS IT-- AZRAEL'S A DESCENDANT OF WHOEVER WROTE THESE WORDS--
--"I AM EDMOND WAYNE."

YOU KNEW?
YOU WERE RIGHT--I *WAS* KEEPING SOMETHING FROM YOU. JACK AND I WERE WORRIED WHAT THE *TRUTH* MIGHT DO TO YOU.
I KNEW YOU'D EVENTUALLY FIGURE IT OUT. AND THAT THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO TO STOP IT...
...EXCEPT *BE THERE* FOR YOU.
JOKER'S RIGHT--*THERE IS A CURSE IN GOTHAM.*
ME.
THAT'S BULLSHIT!
WAS YOUR *FATHER A CURSE?* WAS YOUR *MOTHER?* THEY'RE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR SOMETHING THEY NEVER EVEN KNEW ABOUT, AND *NEITHER ARE YOU!*
WHO CARES IF YOU'RE NOT TECHNICALLY A WAYNE! YOU'RE STILL DOING WHAT THEY'VE ALWAYS DONE--GUARDING THE CITY, USING YOUR FORTUNE TO PROTECT THE PEOPLE--
NOT ACCORDING TO THIS.
A LIST OF THE ELITES--THE GTO FINALLY FOUND RUTH. OR WHAT WAS LEFT OF HER.
THESE ARE THE NAMES OF *EVERY BUSINESS* AND *EVERY INVESTOR* SHE'S EVER MADE A DIME FOR.
SO?
MOST OF IT'S CHANNELED THROUGH ONE COMPANY--THE LARGEST COMPANY IN GOTHAM.
WAYNE-CORP.

THAT'S WHY SHE DIDN'T TELL GOTHAM THE TRUTH ABOUT BATMAN.
BECAUSE I'M HER BIGGEST CLIENT.
AND YOU NEVER KNEW? I MEAN, YOU'RE BATMAN.
THAT'S THE PROBLEM.
I SPEND EACH NIGHT ON PATROL. I SPEND EACH DAY READING CRIME REPORTS, REPAIRING VEHICLES, AND CLEANING THE BLOOD OFF MY BOOTS.
THERE'S NO TIME TO HEAL AND NO TIME TO REST BECAUSE SHUTTING MY EYES MEANS LETTING PEOPLE DIE.
BATMAN'S COMPLETELY TAKEN OVER MY LIFE--I CAN'T EVEN SHAKE SOMEONE'S HAND WITHOUT IMAGINING THREE DIFFERENT WAYS OF BREAKING THEIR ELBOW.
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO BE BRUCE WAYNE ANYMORE--I DON'T EVEN REALLY KNOW WHO HE IS. JOKER AND AZRAEL HAVE PROVEN IT.
GOTHAM WILL NEVER FORGIVE ME.
YES THEY WILL. AFTER ALL, THEY FORGAVE JACK NAPIER.
AND YOU KNOW WHY?
BECAUSE HE TOOK OFF HIS MASK AND ASKED FORGIVENESS.
HE KNEW THAT IN ORDER TO HELP GOTHAM YOU HAD TO TRUST GOTHAM.
OF COURSE I TRUST GOTHAM.
DO YOU?

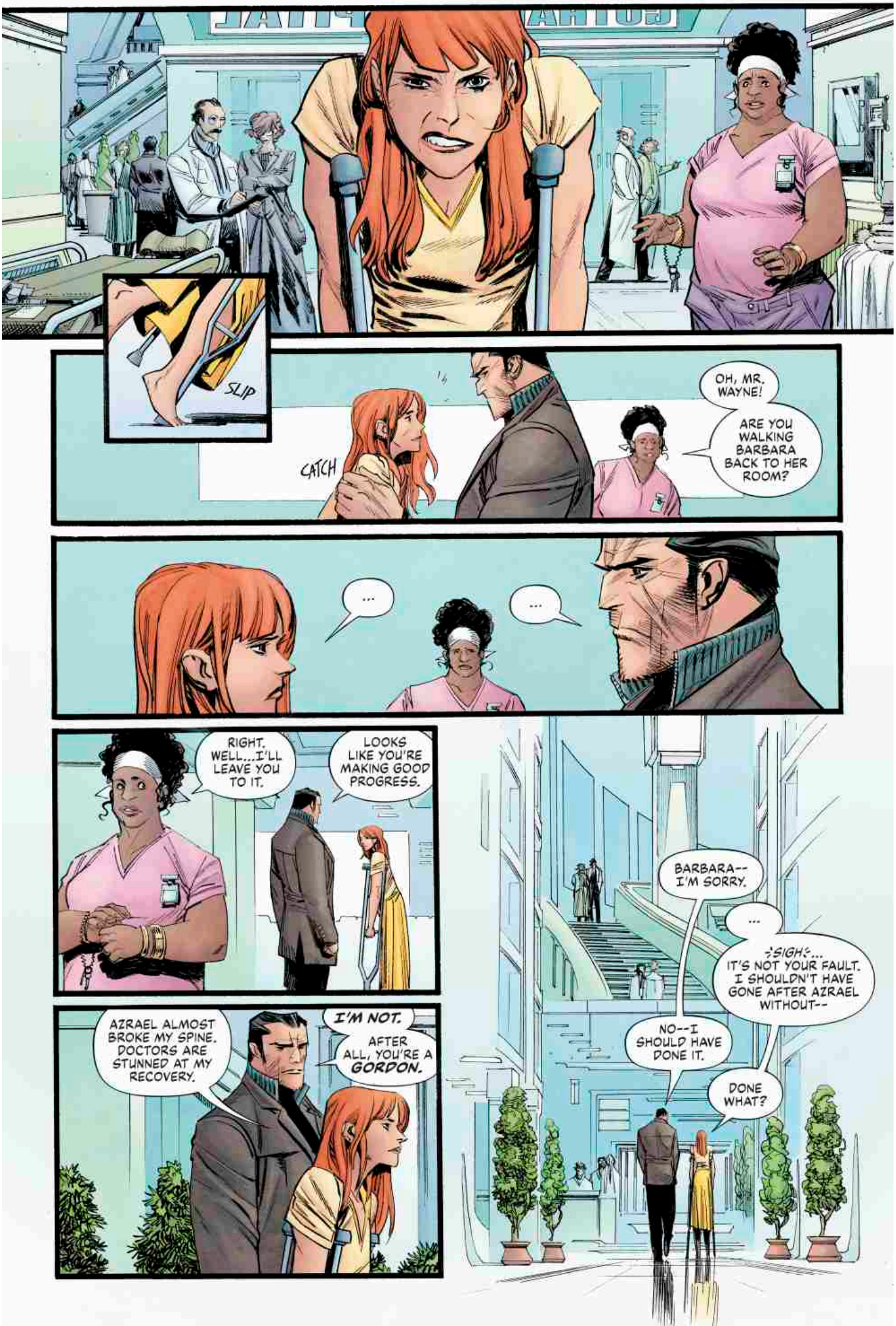
I AM
EDMOND
WAYNE

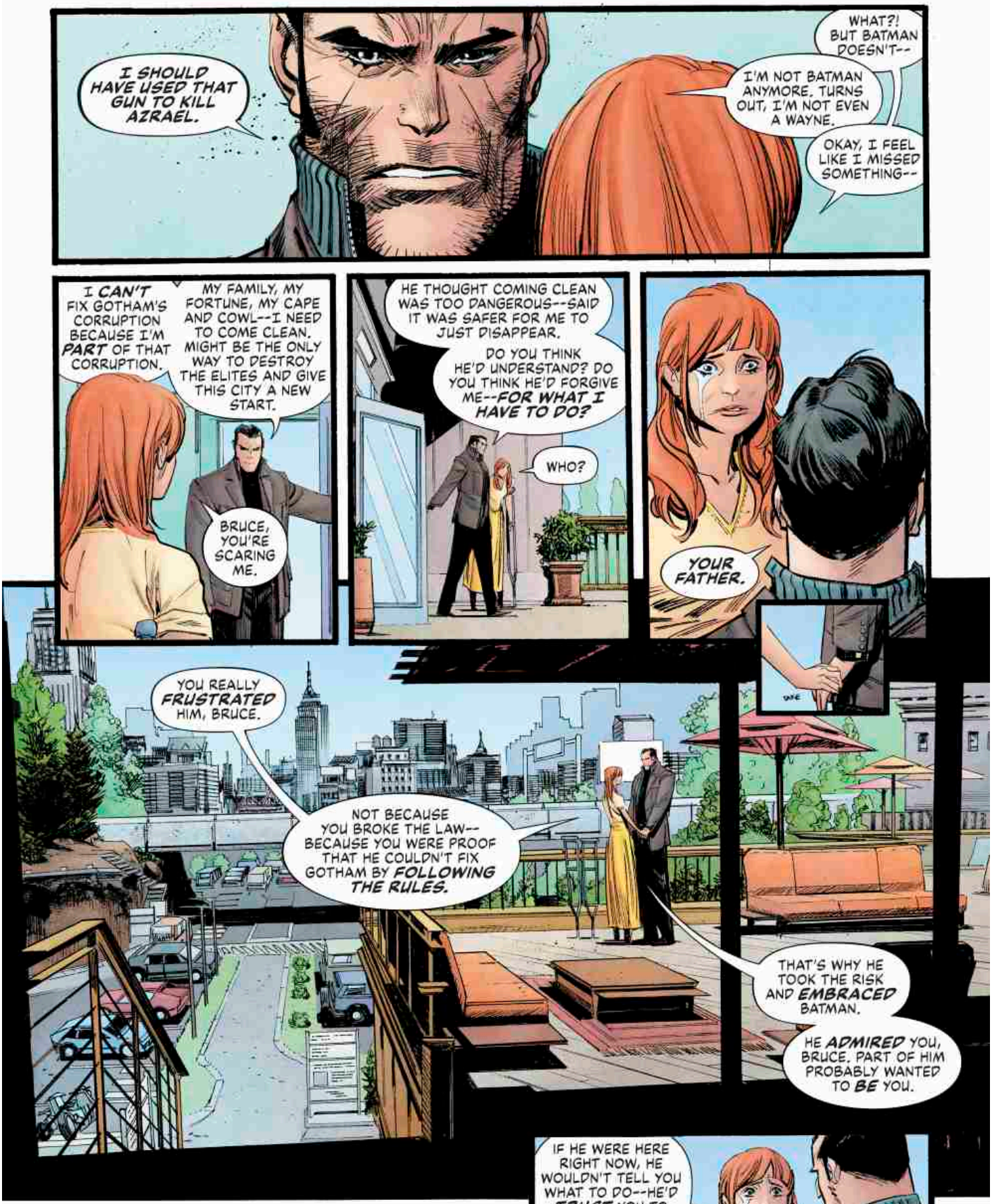
IT'LL DESTROY EVERYTHING. I'LL HAVE NOTHING LEFT.

YOU'LL STILL HAVE ME.

YOU'LL STILL HAVE YOUR FRIENDS.

WHUD
BLAKE!
LAST ONE.
SHIT.


SLIP
CATCH
OH, MR. WAYNE!
ARE YOU WALKING BARBARA BACK TO HER ROOM?
...
...
RIGHT. WELL...I'LL LEAVE YOU TO IT.
LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE MAKING GOOD PROGRESS.
AZRAEL ALMOST BROKE MY SPINE. DOCTORS ARE STUNNED AT MY RECOVERY.
I'M NOT.
AFTER ALL, YOU'RE A GORDON.
BARBARA-- I'M SORRY.
...
-SIGH-... IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT. I SHOULDN'T HAVE GONE AFTER AZRAEL WITHOUT--
NO--I SHOULD HAVE DONE IT.
DONE WHAT?


I SHOULD HAVE USED THAT GUN TO KILL AZRAEL.
WHAT?! BUT BATMAN DOESN'T--
I'M NOT BATMAN ANYMORE. TURNS OUT, I'M NOT EVEN A WAYNE.
OKAY, I FEEL LIKE I MISSED SOMETHING--
I CAN'T FIX GOTHAM'S CORRUPTION BECAUSE I'M PART OF THAT CORRUPTION.
MY FAMILY, MY FORTUNE, MY CAPE AND COWL--I NEED TO COME CLEAN. MIGHT BE THE ONLY WAY TO DESTROY THE ELITES AND GIVE THIS CITY A NEW START.
BRUCE, YOU'RE SCARING ME.
HE THOUGHT COMING CLEAN WAS TOO DANGEROUS--SAID IT WAS SAFER FOR ME TO JUST DISAPPEAR.
DO YOU THINK HE'D UNDERSTAND? DO YOU THINK HE'D FORGIVE ME--FOR WHAT I HAVE TO DO?
WHO?
YOUR FATHER.
YOU REALLY FRUSTRATED HIM, BRUCE.
NOT BECAUSE YOU BROKE THE LAW--BECAUSE YOU WERE PROOF THAT HE COULDN'T FIX GOTHAM BY FOLLOWING THE RULES.
THAT'S WHY HE TOOK THE RISK AND EMBRACED BATMAN.
HE ADMIRED YOU, BRUCE. PART OF HIM PROBABLY WANTED TO BE YOU.
IF HE WERE HERE RIGHT NOW, HE WOULDN'T TELL YOU WHAT TO DO--HE'D TRUST YOU TO MAKE YOUR OWN DECISION--
--THEN HE'D DO EVERYTHING HE COULD TO SUPPORT YOU.

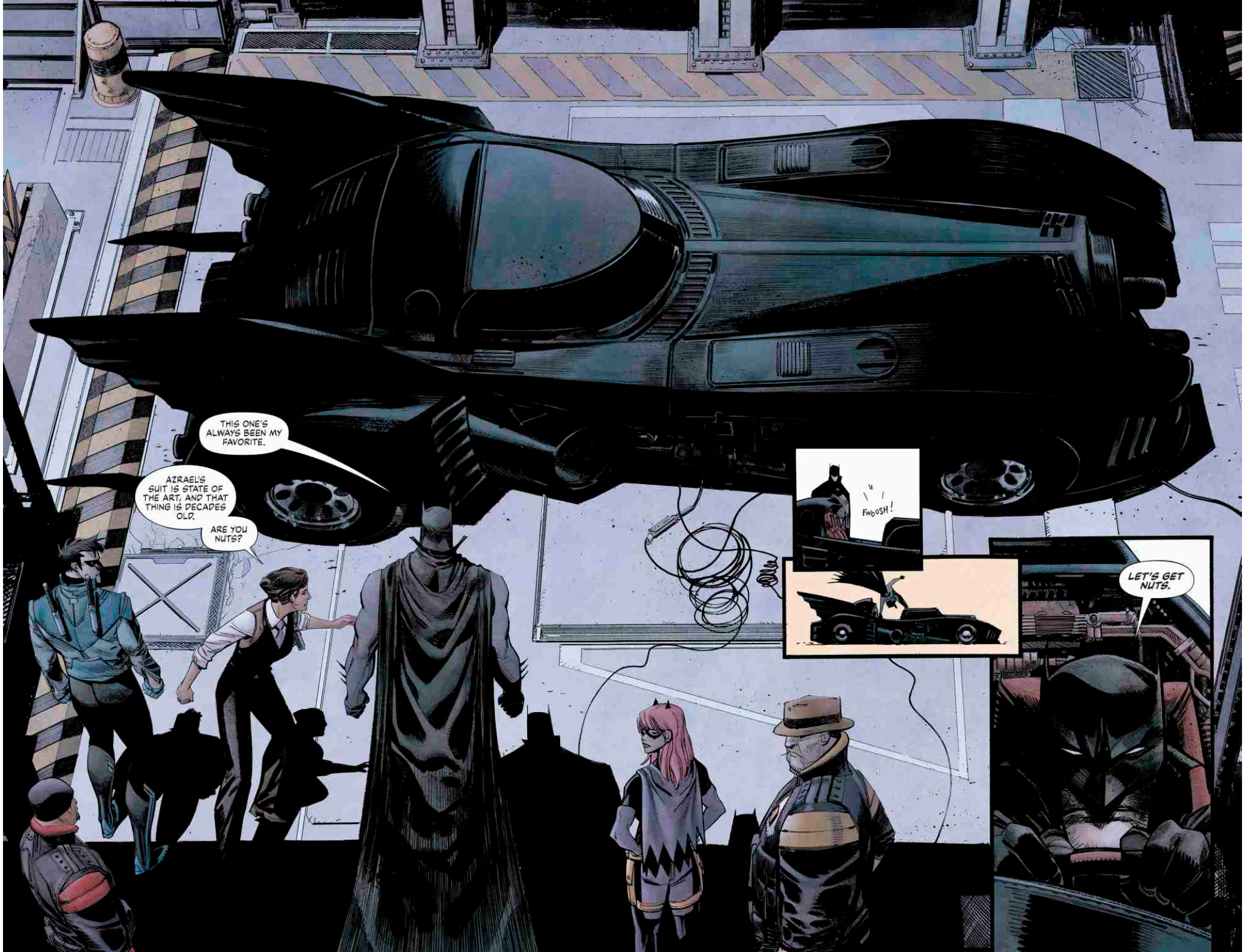
THIS IS COMMISSIONER MONTOYA, AND I'M DECLARING A CITY-WIDE EMERGENCY AS WE BEGIN A MANHUNT FOR JEAN-PAUL VALLEY...
...ALSO KNOWN AS AZRAEL.
VALLEY IS WANTED FOR THE DEATHS OF OVER A DOZEN SUPER-CRIMINALS AND 23 POLICE OFFICERS...
...INCLUDING THE LATE COMMISSIONER JIM GORDON.
GTO AND POLICE HOTLINES ARE STANDING BY FOR ANYONE WHO HAS INFORMATION ON HIS WHEREABOUTS.
THE SUSPECT IS SIX FOOT SEVEN, WEIGHING APPROXIMATELY 290 POUNDS AND CONSIDERED ARMED AND--
LIVE
JAZZ
-TSSSSSS SSSSSSS...-
PEOPLE OF GOTHAM.
LIVE
JAZZ

SALE
TV's
SALE
FOR DECADES, IT'S BEEN MY HONOR TO SERVE YOU. FIGHTING CRIME, SAVING LIVES, TRYING TO MAKE THIS A BETTER PLACE.
BUT I KNEW IT COULDN'T GO ON FOREVER--IT'S CLEAR TO ME NOW THAT THE ERA OF BATMAN MUST COME TO AN END.
WEARING THIS CAPE WAS A SIMPLE IDEA, BORN IN A SIMPLER TIME--AT FIRST I JUST WANTED TO HELP CATCH THE BAD GUYS.
BUT OVER THE YEARS THINGS HAVE GOTTEN MORE COMPLICATED. IT'S NO LONGER A CHILDISH GAME OF COPS AND ROBBERS--IT'S SERIAL KILLERS, MONSTERS, AND SUPER-CRIMINALS.
LIVE
WHEN I STARTED OUT, ALL I NEEDED TO CATCH THEM WAS ROPE AND HANDCUFFS, BUT NOW I'M A ONE-MAN ARMY WHO DOES AS MUCH DAMAGE TO YOU AS I DO TO THEM. I USED TO BE A HERO FROM THE GOLDEN AGE, BUT NOW I'M A VILLAIN.
AND THAT'S WHY JACK NAPIER BEAT ME, BY SAYING WHAT I WAS AFRAID TO ADMIT.
THAT'S WHY I'M SUPPORTING THE NAPIER INITIATIVE.
BEING BATMAN MEANS BEING WHATEVER GOTHAM NEEDS ME TO BE, AND WHAT YOU ALL NEED NOW IS TO KNOW THE TRUTH...
...THAT BATMAN IS REALLY BRUCE WAYNE.
LIVE
I RECENTLY LEARNED THAT THE WAYNE EMPIRE HAS BEEN HIJACKED BY THOSE WHO HAVE CORRUPTED GOTHAM THE MOST--BY THE ELITES.
LIVE
WHICH MAKES ME COMPLICIT IN THEIR CRIMES, WHICH MAKES ME EVEN MORE RESPONSIBLE FOR CRIMINALS LIKE JOKER AND AZRAEL.

THAT'S WHY I'M GIVING IT ALL AWAY--TO DESTROY THE ELITES AND GIVE GOTHAM BACK TO THE PEOPLE. MY FORTUNE DOESN'T BELONG TO ME--IT BELONGS TO YOU.
WAYNECORP AND ALL OF ITS SUBSIDIARIES WILL BE DISSOLVED.
MY ENTIRE INHERITANCE WILL BE PUT INTO A NONPROFIT THAT WILL CREATE BETTER SCHOOLS, LIBRARIES, HOMELESS SHELTERS, AND SCHOLARSHIPS. EVERYTHING WE GENERATE WILL BE DONATED RIGHT BACK TO GOTHAM, OFFSETTING YOUR TAXES FOR DECADES.
GOTHAM WILL NO LONGER BE A CITY OF DARKNESS--IT WILL BE A CITY OF LIGHT. IT WILL BE A PLACE WITHOUT SHADOWS...
...A PLACE WITHOUT BATMAN.
BUT FIRST, I NEED A FAVOR.
AZRAEL'S STILL OUT THERE. AS SOON AS THE SUN GOES DOWN, HE'LL MAKE HIS MOVE.
I CAN GET HIM. BUT I DON'T WANT ANYONE ELSE GETTING HURT.
THAT'S WHY I'M ASKING YOU ALL TO STAY OFF THE STREETS UNTIL I CAN CATCH HIM.
I'M ASKING FOR YOUR FORGIVENESS.
I'M ASKING YOU TO TRUST ME.
I'M ASKING FOR YOUR PERMISSION TO BE BATMAN ONE LAST TIME.

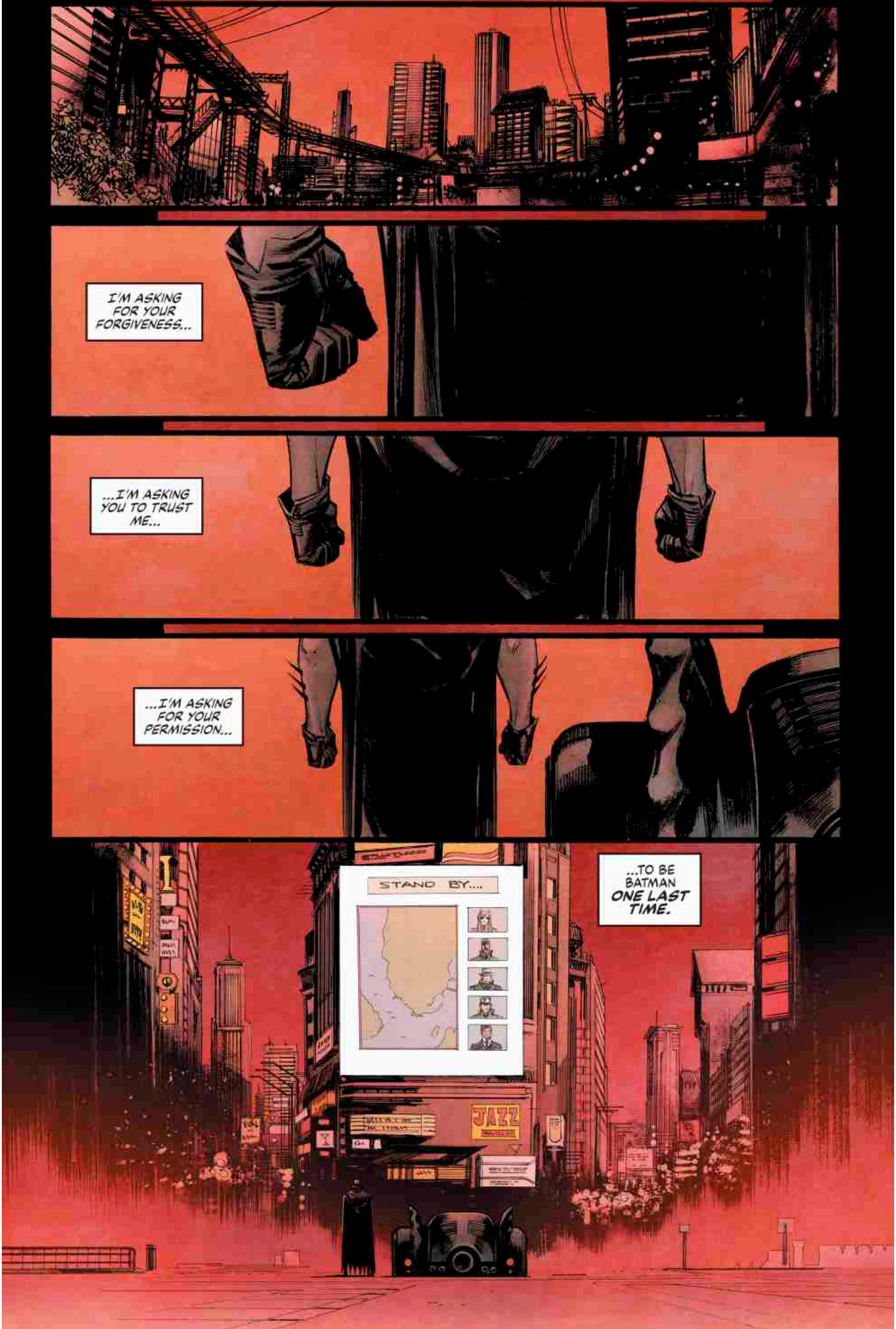
GCPD
YOU JUST CAN'T HELP YOURSELF, CAN YOU?
MAKING DECISIONS ALONE AND FORCING US TO FALL IN LINE BEHIND YOU!
I STARTED THIS. AND NOW I NEED TO END IT.
I'M NOT INTERESTED IN ALLEVIATING YOUR GUILT--GORDON GAVE ME A JOB TO DO, AND I DON'T NEED YOU INTERFERING LIKE THAT!
YOU WANT TO ARREST AZRAEL WITHOUT PEOPLE GETTING HURT? YOU WANT TO STOP THE ELITES? YOU WANT TO GET RID OF BATMAN?
THEN THIS IS THE BEST PLAN.
MOST OF GOTHAM DOESN'T EVEN LIKE YOU--HOW CAN YOU BE SURE EIGHT MILLION PEOPLE WILL CLEAR THE STREETS FOR YOU?
I KNOW IT'S A RISK.
BUT IF THEY CLEAR THE STREETS THEN I'LL KNOW THEY'RE WITH ME.
AND WHEN IT'S OVER, I'LL TURN MYSELF IN.
IN GOTHAM, NO ONE IS ABOVE THE LAW.
INCLUDING ME.
GTO

WE NEED UNITS STATIONED AT EVERY HOSPITAL IN GOTHAM.
WITH RUTH DEAD, AZRAEL WILL NEED A NEW SOURCE OF MEDICATION, SO THOSE WILL LIKELY BE HIS TARGETS.
WAY AHEAD OF YOU.
WE NEED TO CLOSE DOWN THE AIRPORTS, SUBWAYS, AND ANY ROAD LEADING OUT OF GOTHAM.
ON IT.
KEEP AN EYE ON EVERY SECURITY CAMERA THROUGHOUT THE CITY.
GTO
GTO
GOT A BUNCH OF KIDS IN BACKPORT ON LOOKOUT--TURNED NAPIER'S LIBRARY INTO A COMMAND CENTER.
HOW ABOUT YOU--SURE YOU'RE UP FOR THIS?
I CAN STEP ON A GAS PEDAL, IF THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE ASKING.
GOOD.
GARAGE
AND WHAT'LL YOU BE DOING?
I'LL BE IN THE BATMOBILE.
AZRAEL DESTROYED MOST OF THEM WHEN HE ATTACKED THE GTO. SO THERE'S ONLY ONE LEFT.


THIS ONE'S ALWAYS BEEN MY FAVORITE.
AZRAEL'S SUIT IS STATE OF THE ART, AND THAT THING IS DECADES OLD.
ARE YOU NUTS?
FWOOSH!
LET'S GET NUTS.

BA-VROOM
BRUCE, WAIT.
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU CATCH AZRAEL?
ARE YOU GOING TO BRING HIM IN SAFELY AND LET HIM SERVE HIS TIME? OR DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING ELSE IN MIND?
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
YOU KNOW WHAT I'M SAYING.
...
THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT.
IT'S NOT WORTH IT, BRUCE. YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO LIVE WITH YOURSELF. BATMAN DOESN'T KILL.
BATMAN'S DEAD...
...AND SO IS AZRAEL.

VROOM
VROOOOOOOOO


I'M ASKING FOR YOUR FORGIVENESS...
...I'M ASKING YOU TO TRUST ME...
...I'M ASKING FOR YOUR PERMISSION...
STAND BY....
...TO BE BATMAN ONE LAST TIME.
JAZZ

BRUCE WAYNE, COME IN.
DIN R 24

WE'VE SPOTTED AZRAEL!
EAST RIVER HIGHWAY, HEADING NORTH.
ON MY WAY.
FROOM!
FWOOSH!

BATMAN
CURSE OF THE WHITE KNIGHT

BOOK SEVEN

Sean Murphy
Script, Art, Covers

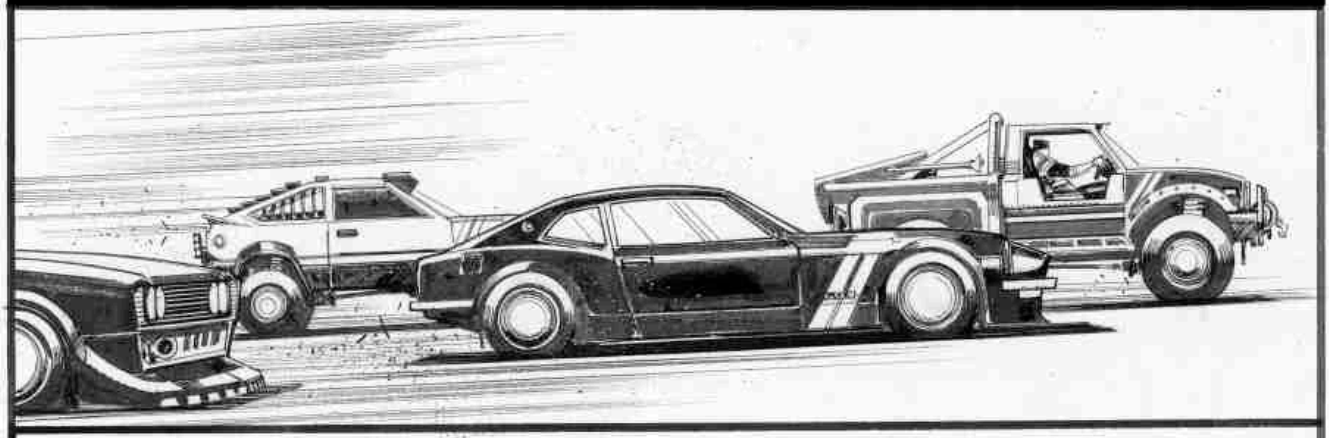
Matt Hollingsworth
Colors & Cover Colors

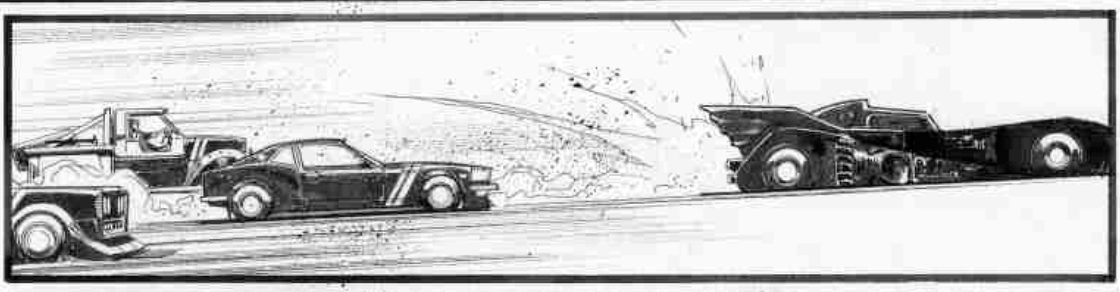
AndWorld Design
Letters

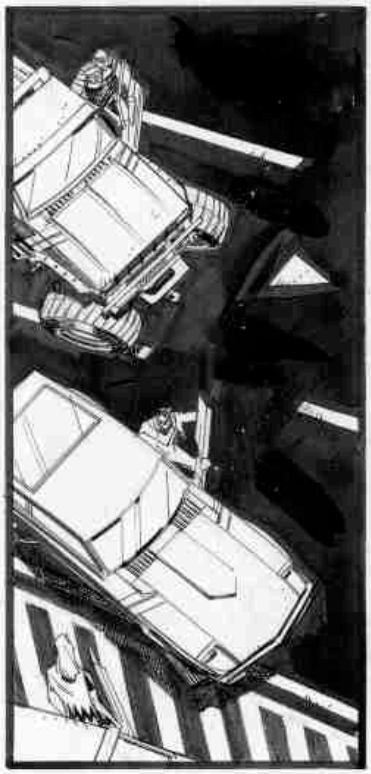
Batman
created by
Bob Kane with Bill Finger

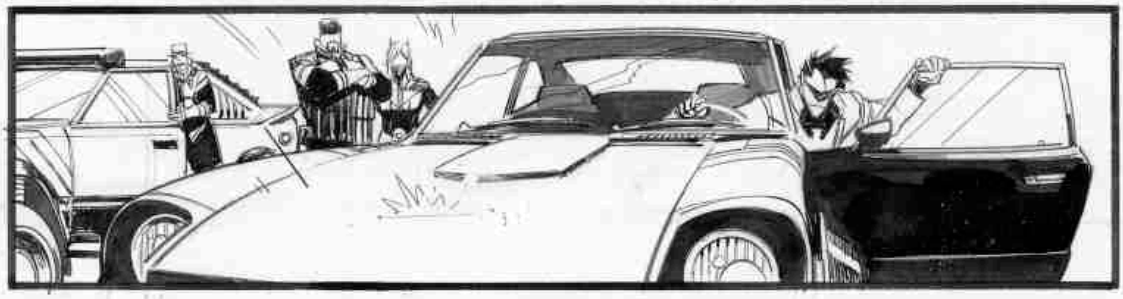
NEXT ISSUE:

Black-and-white art for BATMAN: CURSE OF THE WHITE KNIGHT #8 by Sean Murphy









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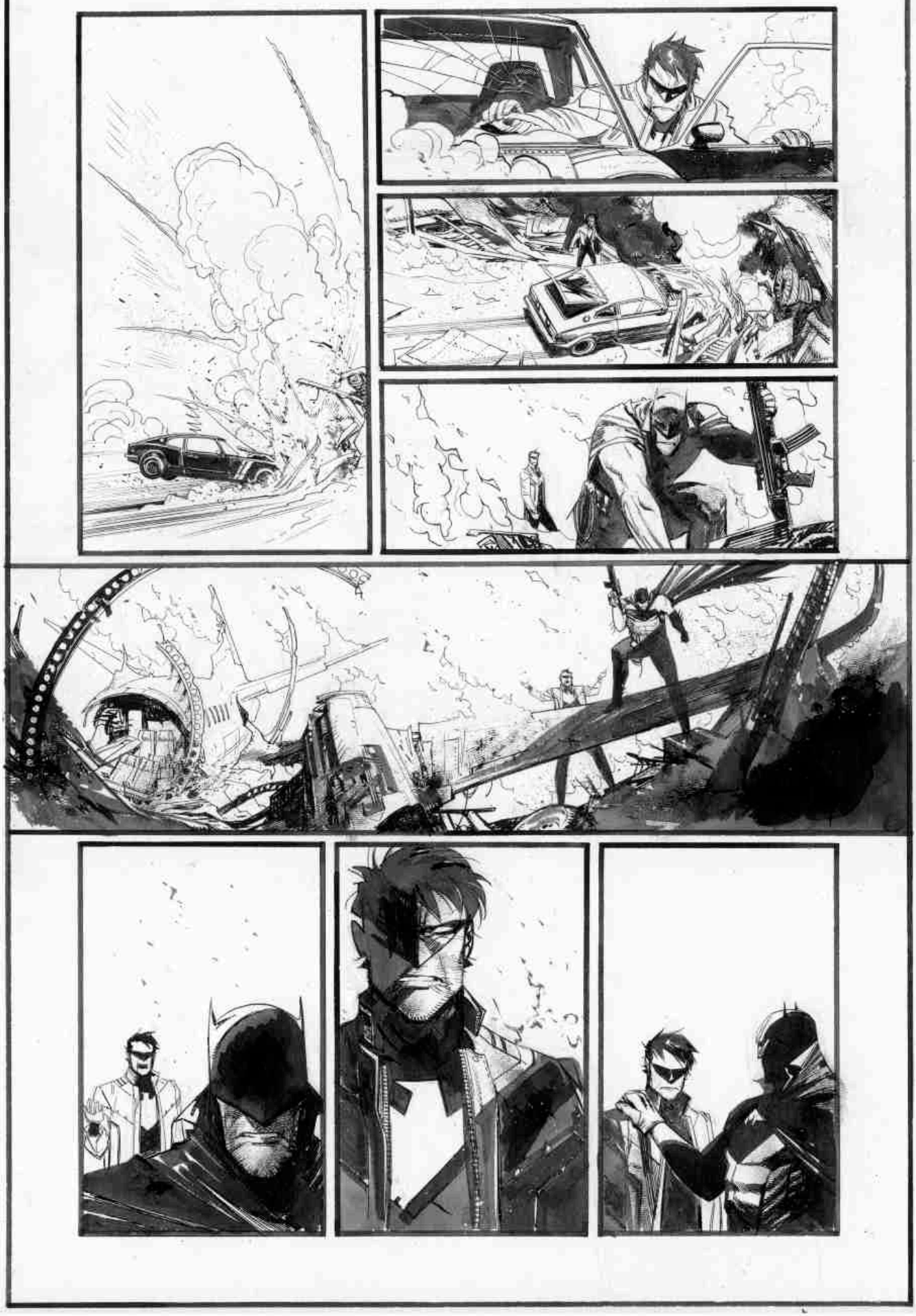

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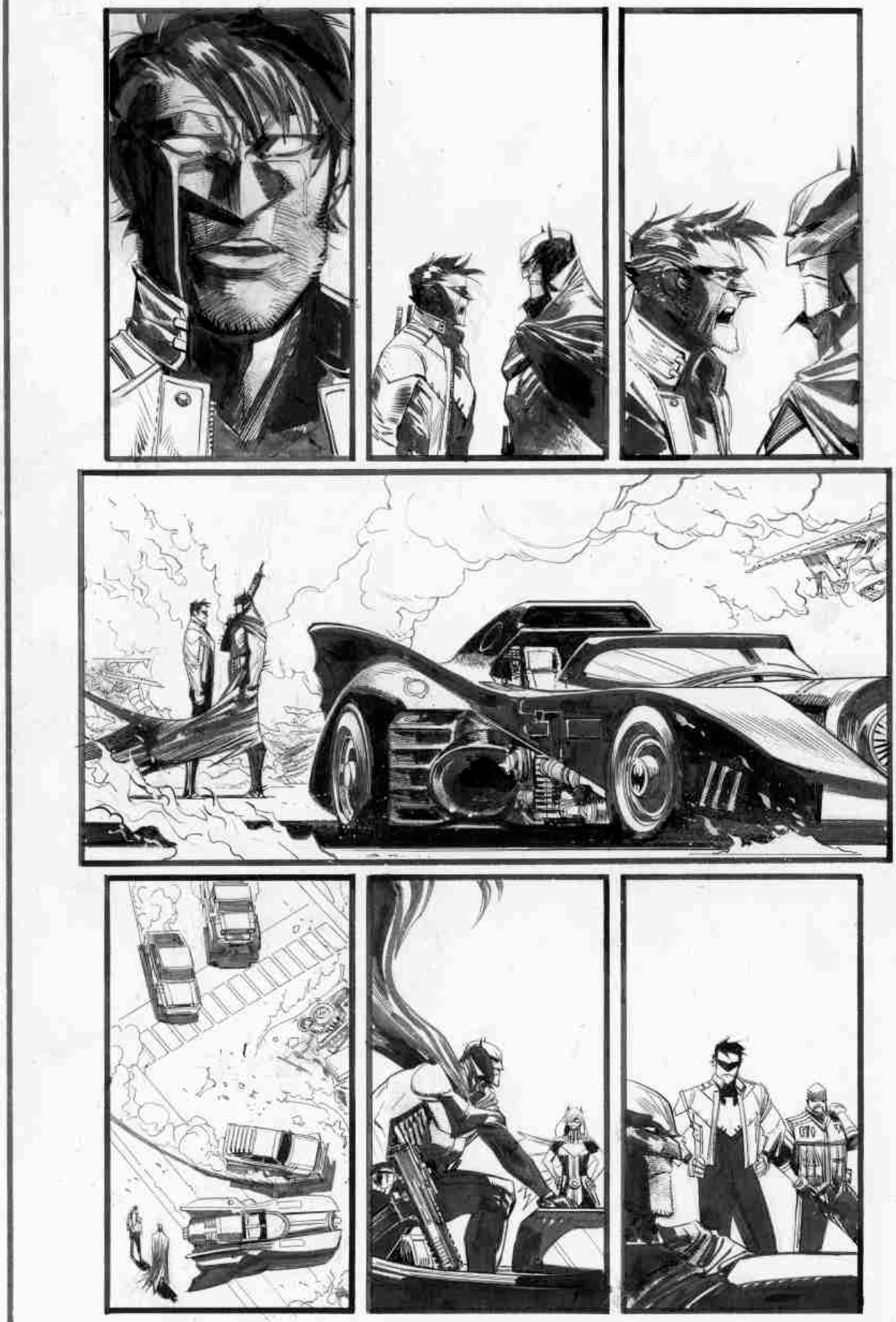

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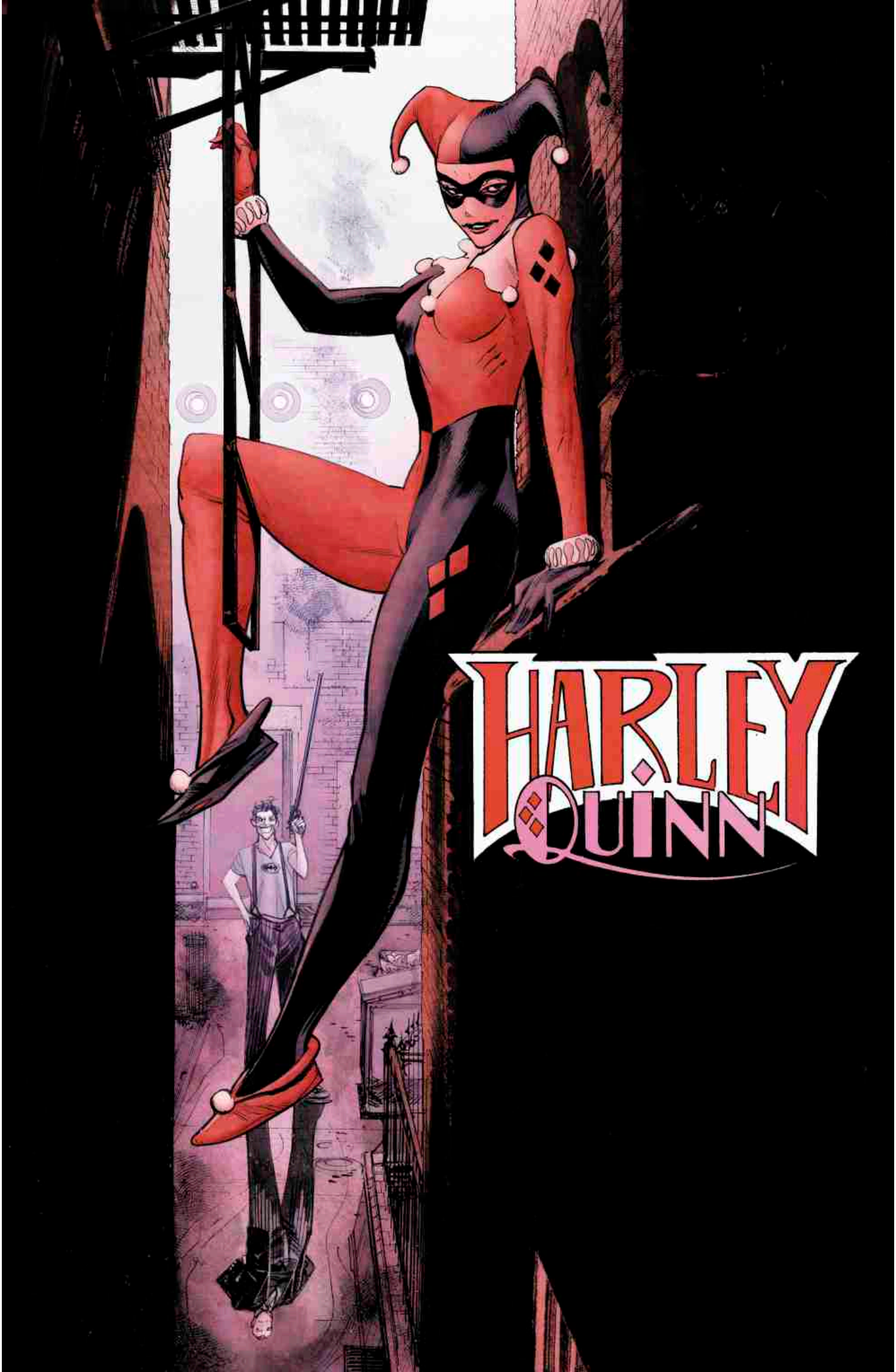
HARLEY
QUINN

Written & illustrated by

SEAN MURPHY

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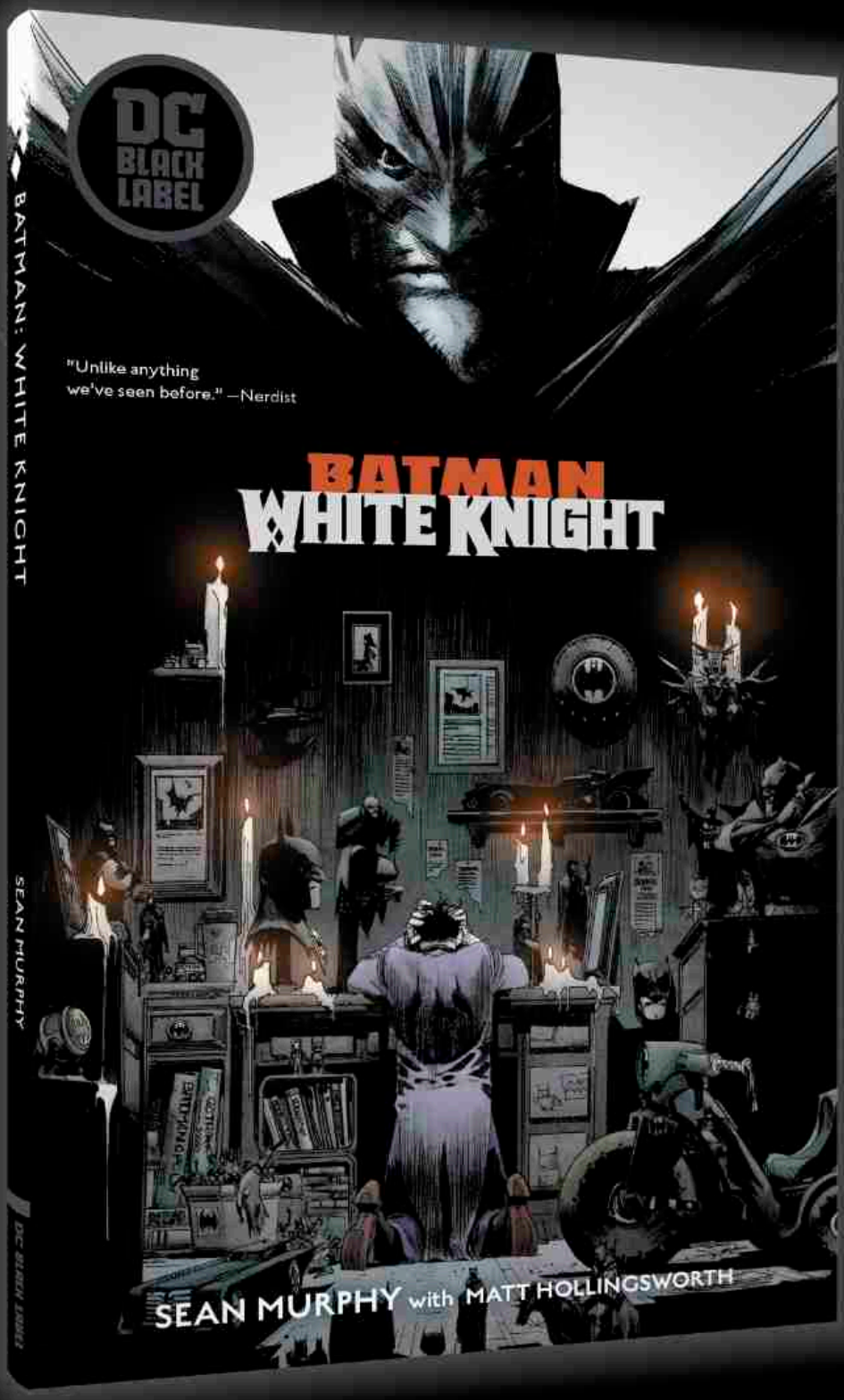

"Cinematic and graphic."
—A.V. Club

"Murphy was truly born to draw Batman."
—IGN

"A breakout hit."
—SyFy Wire

"Holy cow do you get your money's worth."
—Nerdist

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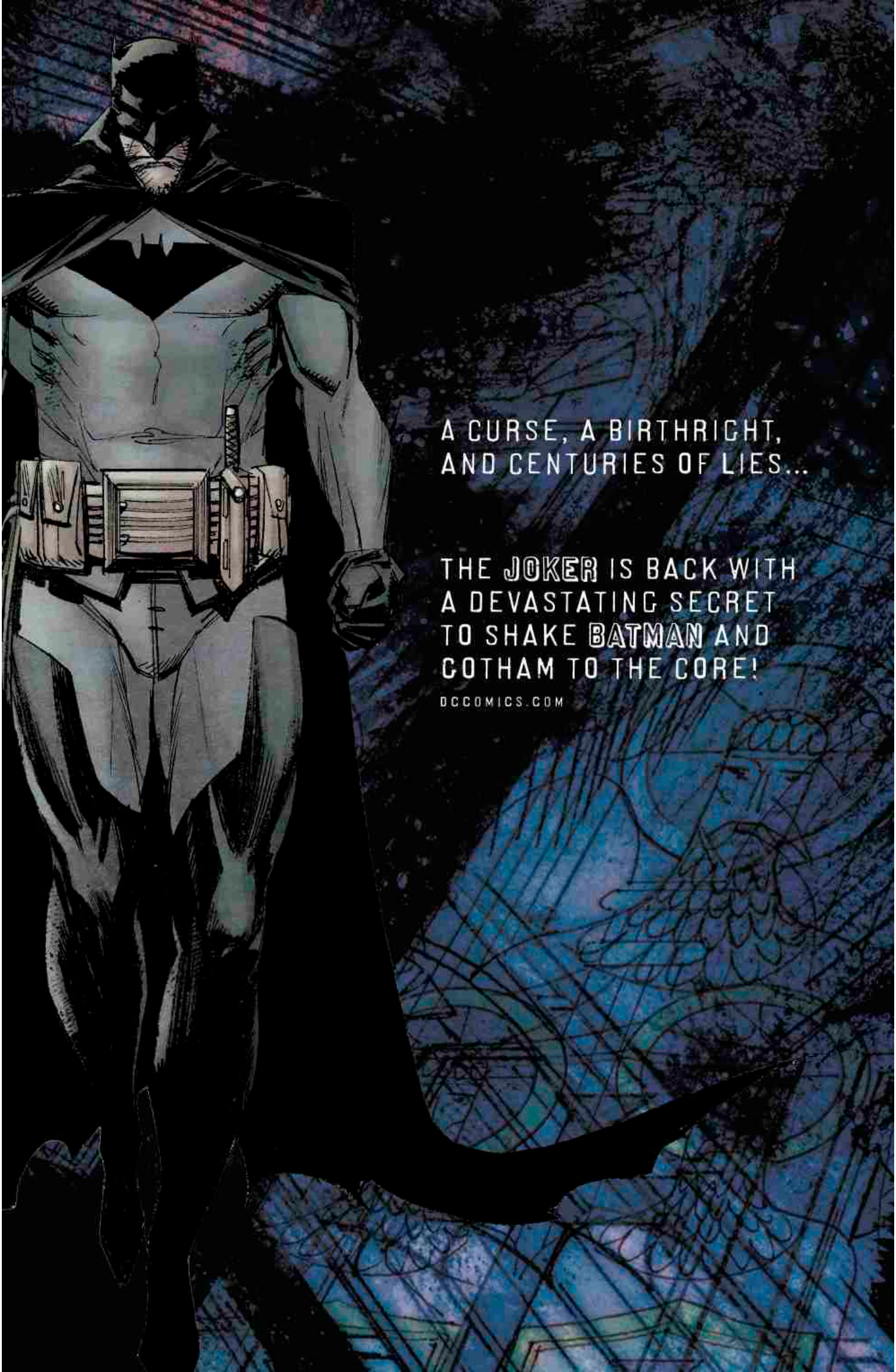
A CURSE, A BIRTHRIGHT,
AND CENTURIES OF LIES...
THE JOKER IS BACK WITH
A DEVASTATING SECRET
TO SHAKE BATMAN AND
GOTHAM TO THE CORE!
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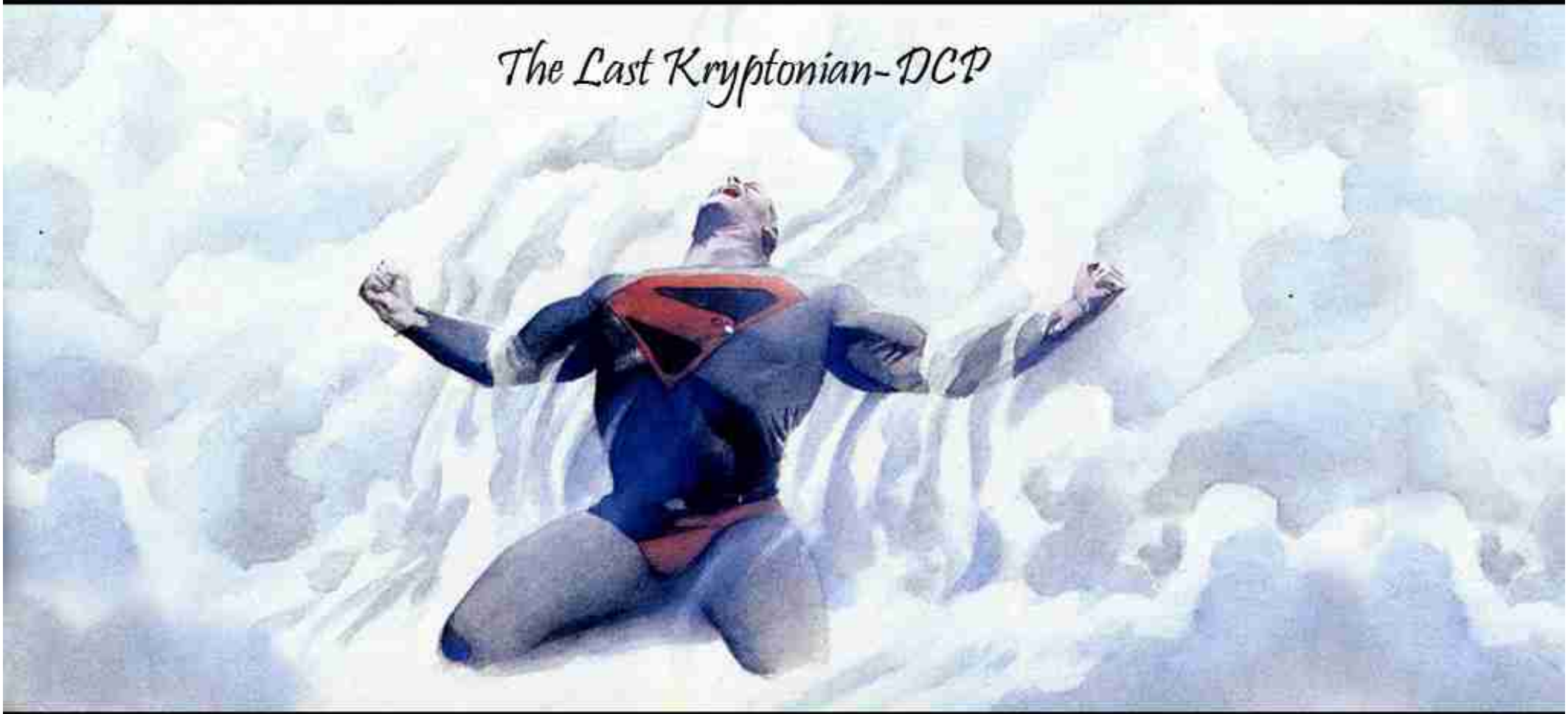
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